

Thomas Jefferson to Jean Baptiste Ternant, October 16, 1792, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE FRENCH MINISTER J. MSS. (JEAN BAPTISTE TERNANT)

Philadelphia, Oct. 16, 1792.

Sir, —I am to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th inst. proposing a stipulation for the abolition of the practice of privateering in times of war. The benevolence of this proposition is worthy of the nation from which it comes, & our sentiments on it have been declared in the treaty to which you are pleased to refer, as well as in some others which have been proposed. There are in those treaties some other principles which would probably meet the approbation of your government, as flowing from the same desire to lessen the occasions & the calamities of war. On all of these as well as on those amendments to our treaty of commerce which might better its conditions with both nations, and which the National assembly of France has likewise brought into view on a former occasion, we are ready to enter into negotiation with you, only proposing to take the whole into consideration at once. And while contemplating provisions which look to the event of war, we are happy in feeling a conviction that it is yet at a great distance from us, & in believing that the sentiments of sincere friendship which we bear to the nation of France are reciprocated on their part. Of these our dispositions be so good as to assure them on this & all other occasions, & to accept yourself those sentiments of esteem & respect with which I have the honor to be Sir, your most obedt. & most humble servt.